



# XACML v3.0 Core and Hierarchical Role Based Access Control (RBAC) Profile Version 1.0

## Committee Specification 01

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### Related work:

This specification replaces or supercedes:

- [Core and hierarchical role based access control \(RBAC\) profile of XACML v2.0](#)

This specification is related to:

- [eXtensible Access Control Markup Language \(XACML\) Version 3.0, CD 03](#)

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None

### Abstract:

This specification defines a profile for the use of XACML in expressing policies that use role based access control (RBAC). It extends the XACML Profile for RBAC Version 1.0 to include a recommended AttributeId for roles, but reduces the scope to address only “core” and “hierarchical” RBAC. This specification has also been updated to apply to XACML 3.0.

**Status:**

This document was last revised or approved by the eXtensible Access Control Markup Language (XACML) TC on the above date. The level of approval is also listed above. Check the “Latest Version” or “Latest Approved Version” location noted above for possible later revisions of this document.

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# 1 Introduction

## {non-normative}

This specification defines a profile for the use of the OASIS eXtensible Access Control Markup Language (XACML) [XACML] to meet the requirements for “core” and “hierarchical” *role* based access control (RBAC) as specified in [ANSI-RBAC]. Use of this profile requires no changes or extensions to standard XACML Version 3.0. Compared to the Core and hierarchical *role* based access control (RBAC) profile of XACML v2.0 [RBAC-V2] there are is no new functionality, rather the specification has just been updated for XACML 3.0.

This specification begins with a non-normative explanation of the building blocks from which the *RBAC* solution is constructed. A full example illustrates these building blocks. The specification then discusses how these building blocks may be used to implement the various elements of the *RBAC* model presented in [ANSI-RBAC]. Finally, the normative section of the specification describes compliant uses of the building blocks in implementing an *RBAC* solution.

This specification assumes the reader is somewhat familiar with XACML. An introduction to the *RBAC* model is available in [RBACIntro].

## 1.1 Glossary

### HasPrivilegesOfRole policy

An optional type of <Policy> that can be included in a Permission <PolicySet> to allow support queries asking if a subject “has the privileges of” a specific *role*. See Section 2.5: HasPrivilegesOfRole Policies and Requests.

### Junior role

In a *role* hierarchy, Role A is junior to Role B if Role B inherits all the *permissions* associated with Role A.

### Multi-role permissions

A set of *permissions* for which a user must hold more than one *role* simultaneously in order to gain access.

### Permission

The ability or right to perform some action on some resource, possibly only under certain specified conditions.

### PPS

Permission <PolicySet>. See Section 1.8: Policies.

### RBAC

*Role* based access control. A model for controlling access to resources where permitted actions on resources are identified with *roles* rather than with individual subject identities.

### Role Enablement Authority

An entity that assigns *role* attributes and values to users or enables *role* attributes and values during a user's session.

### RPS

Role <PolicySet>. See Section 1.8: Policies.

### Role

A job function within the context of an organization that has associated semantics regarding the authority and responsibility conferred on the user assigned to the *role* [ANSI-RBAC].

## 43 Senior role

44 In a **role** hierarchy, Role A is senior to Role B if Role A inherits all the **permissions** associated  
45 with Role B.

## 46 1.2 XML Entity Declarations

47 In order to improve readability, the examples in this specification assume use of the following XML  
48 Internal Entity declarations:

49

```
50 <!ENTITY xml "http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#">  
51 <!ENTITY rule-combine "urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:1.0:rule-combining-algorithm:">  
52 <!ENTITY policy-combine "urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:1.0:policy-combining-algorithm:">  
53 <!ENTITY function "urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:1.0:function:">  
54 <!ENTITY subject-category "urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:1.0:subject-category:">  
55 <!ENTITY subject "urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:1.0:subject:">  
56 <!ENTITY role "urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:2.0:subject:role">  
57 <!ENTITY roles "urn:example:role-values:">  
58 <!ENTITY resource "urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:1.0:resource:">  
59 <!ENTITY action "urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:1.0:action:">  
60 <!ENTITY actions "urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:2.0:actions:">  
61 <!ENTITY environment "urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:1.0:environment:">  
62 <!ENTITY category "urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:attribute-category:">
```

63 For example, “&xml:string” is equivalent to “http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#string”.

## 64 1.3 Terminology

65 The key words “MUST”, “MUST NOT”, “REQUIRED”, “SHALL”, “SHALL NOT”, “SHOULD”, “SHOULD  
66 NOT”, “RECOMMENDED”, “MAY”, and “OPTIONAL” in this document are to be interpreted as described  
67 in [RFC2119].

## 68 1.4 Normative References

- 69 [RFC2119] S. Bradner, *Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels*,  
70 <http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc2119.txt>, IETF RFC 2119, March 1997.
- 71 [XACML] OASIS Committee Specification 01, eXtensible access control markup language  
72 (XACML) Version 3.0. August 2010. [http://docs.oasis-open.org/xacml/3.0/xacml-  
73 3.0-core-spec-cs-01-en.doc](http://docs.oasis-open.org/xacml/3.0/xacml-3.0-core-spec-cs-01-en.doc)

## 74 1.5 Non-Normative References

- 75 [ANSI-RBAC] NIST, *Role Based Access Control*, ANSI INCITS 359-2004,  
76 <http://csrc.nist.gov/rbac/>
- 77 [RBACIntro] D. Ferraiolo, R. Sandhu, S. Gavrila, D.R. Kuhn, R. Chandramouli, *Proposed  
78 NIST Standard for Role-Based Access Control*, ACM Transaction on Information  
79 and System Security, Vol. 4, No. 3, August 2001, pages 224-274,  
80 <http://csrc.nist.gov/rbac/rbacSTD-ACM.pdf>
- 81 [RBAC-V2] OASIS Standard, *Core and hierarchical role based access control (RBAC) profile  
82 of XACML v2.0*, 1 February 2005, [http://docs.oasis-  
83 open.org/xacml/2.0/access\\_control-xacml-2.0-rbac-profile1-spec-os.pdf](http://docs.oasis-open.org/xacml/2.0/access_control-xacml-2.0-rbac-profile1-spec-os.pdf)

## 84 1.6 Scope

85 **Role** based access control allows policies to be specified in terms of subject **roles** rather than strictly in  
86 terms of individual subject identities. This is important for scalability and manageability of access control  
87 systems.

88 The policies specified in this profile can answer three types of questions:

- 89 1. If a subject has **roles**  $R_1, R_2, \dots, R_n$  enabled, can subject X access a given resource using a given  
90 action?
- 91 2. Is subject X allowed to have **role**  $R_i$  enabled?
- 92 3. If a subject has **roles**  $R_1, R_2, \dots, R_n$  enabled, does that mean the subject will have **permissions**  
93 associated with a given **role**  $R_i$ ? That is, is **role**  $R_i$  either equal to or junior to any of **roles**  $R_1, R_2,$   
94  $\dots, R_n$ ?

95 The policies specified in this profile do not answer the question “What set of **roles** does subject X have?”  
96 That question must be handled by a **Role Enablement Authority**, and not directly by an XACML PDP.  
97 Such an entity may make use of XACML policies, but will need additional information. See Section 3:  
98 Assigning and Enabling Role Attributes for more information about **Role Enablement Authorities**.

99 The policies specified in this profile assume all the **roles** for a given subject have already been enabled at  
100 the time an authorization decision is requested. They do not deal with an environment in which **roles**  
101 must be enabled dynamically based on the resource or actions a subject is attempting to perform. For  
102 this reason, the policies specified in this profile also do not deal with static or dynamic “Separation of  
103 Duty” (see [ANSI-RBAC]). A future profile may address the requirements of this type of environment.

## 104 1.7 Role

105 In this profile, **roles** are expressed as XACML Subject Attributes. There are two exceptions: in a Role  
106 Assignment `<PolicySet>` or `<Policy>` and in a HasPrivilegesOfRole `<Policy>`, the **role** appears as  
107 a Resource Attribute. See Section 2.5: HasPrivilegesOfRole Policies and Requests and Section 3:  
108 Assigning and Enabling Role Attributes for more information.

109 **Role** attributes may be expressed in either of two ways, depending on the requirements of the application  
110 environment. In some environments there may be a small number of “**role** attributes”, where the name of  
111 each such attribute is some name indicating “**role**”, and where the value of each such attribute indicates  
112 the name of the **role** held. For example, in this first type of environment, there may be one “**role** attribute”  
113 having the `AttributeId` “&role;” (this profile recommends use of this identifier). The possible **roles** are  
114 values for this one attribute, and might be “&roles;officer”, “&roles;manager”, and “&roles;employee”. This  
115 way of expressing **roles** works best with the XACML way of expressing policies. This method of  
116 identifying **roles** is also most conducive to interoperability.

117 Alternatively, in other application environments, there may be a number of different attribute identifiers,  
118 each indicating a different **role**. For example, in this second type of environment, there might be three  
119 attribute identifiers: “urn:someapp:attributes:officer-role”, “urn:someapp:attributes:manager-role”, and  
120 “urn:someapp:attributes:employee-role”. In this case the value of the attribute may be empty or it may  
121 contain various parameters associated with the **role**. XACML policies can handle **roles** expressed in this  
122 way, but not as naturally as in the first way.

123 XACML supports multiple subjects per access request, indicating various entities that may be involved in  
124 making the request. For example, there is usually a human user who initiates the request, at least  
125 indirectly. There are usually one or more applications or code bases that generate the actual low-level  
126 access request on behalf of the user. There is some computing device on which the application or code  
127 base is executing, and this device may have an identity such an IP address. XACML identifies each such  
128 Subject with a `Category` xml attribute in the `<Attributes>` element that indicates the type of subject  
129 being described. For example, the human user has a `Category` of `&subject-category;access-subject;`  
130 the application that generates the access request has a `Category` of `&subject-category;codebase` and  
131 so on. In this profile, a **role** attribute may be associated with any of the categories of subjects involved in  
132 making an access request.

## 133 1.8 Policies

134 In this profile, four types of policies are specified.

- 135 1. **Role <PolicySet> or RPS**: a `<PolicySet>` that associates holders of a given **role** attribute  
136 and value with a `Permission <PolicySet>` that contains the actual **permissions** associated with  
137 the given **role**. The `<Target>` element of a `Role <PolicySet>` limits the applicability of the  
138 `<PolicySet>` to subjects holding the associated **role** attribute and value. Each `Role`

- 139 <PolicySet> references a single corresponding Permission <PolicySet> but does not  
140 contain or reference any other <Policy> or <PolicySet> elements.
- 141 2. **Permission <PolicySet> or PPS:** a <PolicySet> that contains the actual **permissions**  
142 associated with a given **role**. It contains <Policy> elements and <Rules> that describe the  
143 resources and actions that subjects are permitted to access, along with any further conditions on  
144 that access, such as time of day. A given Permission <PolicySet> may also contain  
145 references to Permission <PolicySet>s associated with other **roles** that are junior to the given  
146 **role**, thereby allowing the given Permission <PolicySet> to inherit all **permissions** associated  
147 with the **role** of the referenced Permission <PolicySet>. The <Target> element of a  
148 Permission <PolicySet>, if present, must not limit the subjects to which the <PolicySet> is  
149 applicable.
  - 150 3. **Role Assignment <Policy> or <PolicySet>:** a <Policy> or <PolicySet> that defines  
151 which **roles** can be enabled or assigned to which subjects. It may also specify restrictions on  
152 combinations of **roles** or total number of **roles** assigned to or enabled for a given subject. This  
153 type of policy is used by a **Role Enablement Authority**. Use of a Role Assignment <Policy> or  
154 <PolicySet> is optional.
  - 155 4. **HasPrivilegesOfRole <Policy>:** a <Policy> in a Permission <PolicySet> that supports  
156 requests asking whether a subject has the privileges associated with a given **role**. If this type of  
157 request is to be supported, then a HasPrivilegesOfRole <Policy> must be included in each  
158 Permission <PolicySet>. Support for this type of <Policy>, and thus for requests asking  
159 whether a subject has the privileges associated with a given **role**, is optional.

160 Permission <PolicySet> instances must be stored in the policy repository in such a way that they can  
161 never be used as the initial policy for an XACML PDP; Permission <PolicySet> instances must be  
162 reachable only through the corresponding Role <PolicySet>. This is because, in order to support  
163 hierarchical **roles**, a Permission <PolicySet> must be applicable to every subject. The Permission  
164 <PolicySet> depends on its corresponding Role <PolicySet> to ensure that only subjects holding  
165 the corresponding **role** attribute will gain access to the **permissions** in the given Permission  
166 <PolicySet>.

167 Use of separate Role <PolicySet> and Permission <PolicySet> instances allows support for  
168 Hierarchical **RBAC**, where a more *senior* **role** can acquire the **permissions** of a more *junior* **role**. A  
169 Permission <PolicySet> that does not reference other Permission <PolicySet> elements could  
170 actually be an XACML <Policy> rather than a <PolicySet>. Requiring it to be a <PolicySet>,  
171 however, allows its associated **role** to become part of a **role** hierarchy at a later time without requiring  
172 any change to other policies.

## 173 1.9 Multi-Role Permissions

174 In this profile, it is possible to express policies where a user must hold several **roles** simultaneously in  
175 order to gain access to certain **permissions**. For example, changing the care instructions for a hospital  
176 patient may require that the Subject performing the action have both the physician **role** and the staff **role**.

177 These policies may be expressed using a Role <PolicySet> where the <Target> element requires the  
178 <Attributes> element with the subject attribute category to have all necessary **role** attributes. This is  
179 done by using a single <AllOf> element containing multiple <Match> elements. The associated  
180 Permission <PolicySet> should specify the **permissions** associated with Subjects who simultaneously  
181 have all the specified **roles** enabled.

182 The Permission <PolicySet> associated with a multi-**role** policy may reference the Permission  
183 <PolicySet> instances associated with other **roles**, and thus may inherit **permissions** from other  
184 **roles**. The **permissions** associated with a given multi-**role** <PolicySet> may also be inherited by  
185 another **role** if the other **role** includes a reference to the Permission <PolicySet> associated with the  
186 multi-**role** policy in its own Permission <PolicySet>.



---

## 187 2 Example

188 {non-normative}

189 This section presents a complete example of the types of policies associated with **role** based access  
190 control.

191 Assume an organization uses two **roles**, manager and employee. In this example, they are expressed  
192 as two separate values for a single XACML Attribute with `AttributeId` “&role;”. The &role; Attribute  
193 values corresponding to the two **roles** are “&roles;employee” and “&roles;manager”. An employee has  
194 **permission** to create a purchase order. A manager has **permission** to sign a purchase order, plus any  
195 **permissions** associated with the employee **role**. The manager **role** therefore is senior to the employee  
196 **role**, and the employee **role** is junior to the manager **role**.

197 According to this profile, there will be two Permission <PolicySet> instances: one for the manager **role**  
198 and one for the employee **role**. The manager Permission <PolicySet> will give any Subject the  
199 specific **permission** to sign a purchase order and will reference the employee Permission <PolicySet>  
200 in order to inherit its **permissions**. The employee Permission <PolicySet> will give any Subject the  
201 **permission** to create a purchase order.

202 According to this profile, there will also be two Role <PolicySet> instances: one for the manager **role**  
203 and one for the employee **role**. The manager Role <PolicySet> will contain a <Target> requiring that  
204 the Subject hold a &role; Attribute with a value of “&roles;manager”. It will reference the manager  
205 Permission <PolicySet>. The employee Role <PolicySet> will contain a <Target> requiring that  
206 the Subject hold a &role; Attribute with a value of “&roles;employee”. It will reference the employee  
207 Permission <PolicySet>.

208 The actual XACML policies implementing this example follow. An example of a Role Assignment Policy is  
209 included in Section 3: Assigning and Enabling Role Attributes.

### 210 2.1 Permission <PolicySet> for the manager role

211 The following Permission <PolicySet> contains the **permissions** associated with the manager **role**.  
212 The PDP's policy retrieval must be set up such that access to this <PolicySet> is gained only by  
213 reference from the manager Role <PolicySet>.

214

```
215 <PolicySet xmlns="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17"  
216   xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"  
217   xsi:schemaLocation="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17 xacml-  
218   core-v3-schema-wd-17.xsd"  
219   PolicySetId="PPS:manager:role"  
220   Version="1.0"  
221   PolicyCombiningAlgId="&policy-combine;permit-overrides">  
222   <Target/>  
223  
224   <!-- Permissions specifically for the manager role -->  
225   <Policy PolicyId="Permissions:specifically:for:the:manager:role"  
226     Version="1.0"  
227     RuleCombiningAlgId="&rule-combine;permit-overrides">  
228     <Target/>  
229     <!-- Permission to sign a purchase order -->  
230     <Rule RuleId="Permission:to:sign:a:purchase:order" Effect="Permit">  
231       <Target>  
232         <AnyOf>  
233           <AllOf>  
234             <Match MatchId="&function:string-equal">  
235               <AttributeValue  
236                 DataType="&xml:string">purchase order</AttributeValue>  
237               <AttributeDesignator
```

```

238         MustBePresent="false"
239         Category="&category;resource"
240         AttributeId="&resource;resource-id"
241         DataType="&xml;string"/>
242     </Match>
243 </AllOf>
244 </AnyOf>
245 <AnyOf>
246     <AllOf>
247         <Match MatchId="&function;string-equal">
248             <AttributeValue
249                 DataType="&xml;string">sign</AttributeValue>
250             <AttributeDesignator
251                 MustBePresent="false"
252                 Category="&category;action"
253                 AttributeId="&action;action-id"
254                 DataType="&xml;string"/>
255             </Match>
256         </AllOf>
257     </AnyOf>
258 </Target>
259 </Rule>
260 </Policy>
261
262 <!-- Include permissions associated with employee role -->
263 <PolicySetIdReference>PPS:employee:role</PolicySetIdReference>
264 </PolicySet>

```

265 *Listing 1 Permission <PolicySet> for managers*

## 266 2.2 Permission <PolicySet> for employee role

267 The following Permission <PolicySet> contains the *permissions* associated with the employee *role*.  
268 The PDP's policy retrieval must be set up such that access to this <PolicySet> is gained only by  
269 reference from the employee Role <PolicySet> or by reference from the more senior manager Role  
270 <PolicySet> via the manager Permission <PolicySet>.

```

271
272 <PolicySet xmlns="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17"
273     xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
274     xsi:schemaLocation="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17 xacml-
275 core-v3-schema-wd-17.xsd"
276     PolicySetId="PPS:employee:role"
277     Version="1.0"
278     PolicyCombiningAlgId="&policy-combine;permit-overrides">
279
280     <Target/>
281     <!-- Permissions specifically for the employee role -->
282     <Policy PolicyId="Permissions:specifically:for:the:employee:role"
283         Version="1.0"
284         RuleCombiningAlgId="&rule-combine;permit-overrides">
285         <Target/>
286         <!-- Permission to create a purchase order -->
287         <Rule RuleId="Permission:to:create:a:purchase:order" Effect="Permit">
288             <Target>
289                 <AnyOf>
290                     <AllOf>
291                         <Match MatchId="&function;string-equal">
292                             <AttributeValue
293                                 DataType="&xml;string">purchase order</AttributeValue>
294                             <AttributeDesignator
295                                 MustBePresent="false"
296                                 Category="&category;resource"
297                                 AttributeId="&resource;resource-id"

```

```

298         DataType="&xml:string"/>
299     </Match>
300 </AllOf>
301 </AnyOf>
302 <AnyOf>
303     <AllOf>
304         <Match MatchId="&function:string-equal">
305             <AttributeValue
306                 DataType="&xml:string">create</AttributeValue>
307             <AttributeDesignator
308                 MustBePresent="false"
309                 Category="&category;action"
310                 AttributeId="&action;action-id"
311                 DataType="&xml:string"/>
312         </Match>
313     </AllOf>
314 </AnyOf>
315 </Target>
316 </Rule>
317 </Policy>
318 </PolicySet>

```

319 *Listing 2 Permission <PolicySet> for employees*

## 320 2.3 Role <PolicySet> for the manager role

321 The following Role <PolicySet> is applicable, according to its <Target>, only to Subjects who hold a  
322 &role; Attribute with a value of "&roles;manager". The <PolicySetIdReference> points to the  
323 Permission <PolicySet> associated with the manager **role**. That Permission <PolicySet> may be  
324 viewed in Section 2.1: Permission <PolicySet> for the manager **role** above.

```

325
326 <PolicySet xmlns="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17"
327     xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
328     xsi:schemaLocation="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17 xacml-
329 core-v3-schema-wd-17.xsd"
330     PolicySetId="RPS:manager:role"
331     Version="1.0"
332     PolicyCombiningAlgId="&policy-combine;permit-overrides">
333     <Target>
334         <AnyOf>
335             <AllOf>
336                 <Match MatchId="&function:anyURI-equal">
337                     <AttributeValue
338                         DataType="&xml:anyURI">&roles;manager</AttributeValue>
339                     <AttributeDesignator
340                         MustBePresent="false"
341                         Category="&subject-category;access-subject"
342                         AttributeId="&role;"
343                         DataType="&xml:anyURI"/>
344                 </Match>
345             </AllOf>
346         </AnyOf>
347     </Target>
348
349     <!-- Use permissions associated with the manager role -->
350     <PolicySetIdReference>PPS:manager:role</PolicySetIdReference>
351 </PolicySet>

```

352 *Listing 3 Role <PolicySet> for managers*

## 353 2.4 Role <PolicySet> for employee role

354 The following Role <PolicySet> is applicable, according to its <Target>, only to Subjects who hold a  
355 &role; Attribute with a value of "&roles;employee". The <PolicySetIdReference> points to the  
356 Permission <PolicySet> associated with the employee **role**. That Permission <PolicySet> may be  
357 viewed in Section 2.2: Permission <PolicySet> for employee **role** above.

358

```
359 <PolicySet xmlns="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17"  
360   xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"  
361   xsi:schemaLocation="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17 xacml-  
362 core-v3-schema-wd-17.xsd"  
363   PolicySetId="RPS:employee:role"  
364   Version="1.0"  
365   PolicyCombiningAlgId="&policy-combine;permit-overrides">  
366   <Target>  
367     <AnyOf>  
368       <AllOf>  
369         <Match MatchId="&function;anyURI-equal">  
370           <AttributeValue  
371             DataType="&xml;anyURI">&roles;employee</AttributeValue>  
372           <AttributeDesignator  
373             MustBePresent="false"  
374             Category="&subject-category;access-subject"  
375             AttributeId="&role;"  
376             DataType="&xml;anyURI"/>  
377         </Match>  
378       </AllOf>  
379     </AnyOf>  
380   </Target>  
381  
382   <!-- Use permissions associated with the employee role -->  
383   <PolicySetIdReference>PPS:employee:role</PolicySetIdReference>  
384 </PolicySet>
```

385 *Listing 4 Role <PolicySet> for employees*

## 386 2.5 HasPrivilegesOfRole Policies and Requests

387 An XACML **RBAC** system MAY choose to support queries of the form "Does this subject have the  
388 privileges of **role X**?" If so, each Permission <PolicySet> MUST contain a HasPrivilegesOfRole  
389 <Policy>.

390 For the Permission <PolicySet> for managers, the HasPrivilegesOfRole <Policy> would look as  
391 follows:

392

```
393 <!-- HasPrivilegesOfRole Policy for manager role -->  
394 <Policy xmlns="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17"  
395   xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"  
396   xsi:schemaLocation="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17 xacml-  
397 core-v3-schema-wd-17.xsd"  
398   PolicyId="Permission:to:have:manager:role:permissions"  
399   Version="1.0"  
400   RuleCombiningAlgId="&rule-combine;permit-overrides">  
401  
402   <Target/>  
403   <!-- Permission to have manager role permissions -->  
404   <Rule RuleId="Permission:to:have:manager:permissions" Effect="Permit">  
405     <Condition>  
406       <Apply FunctionId="&function;and">  
407         <Apply FunctionId="&function;anyURI-is-in">  
408           <AttributeValue
```

```

409         DataType="&xml;anyURI">&roles;manager</AttributeValue>
410     <AttributeDesignator
411         MustBePresent="false"
412         Category="&category;resource"
413         AttributeId="&role;"
414         DataType="&xml;anyURI"/>
415 </Apply>
416 <Apply FunctionId="&function;anyURI-is-in">
417     <AttributeValue
418         DataType="&xml;anyURI">&actions;hasPrivilegesofRole</AttributeValue>
419     <AttributeDesignator
420         MustBePresent="false"
421         Category="&category;action"
422         AttributeId="&action;action-id"
423         DataType="&xml;anyURI"/>
424 </Apply>
425 </Apply>
426 </Condition>
427 </Rule>
428 </Policy>

```

429 *Listing 5 HasPrivilegesOfRole <Policy> for manager role*

430

431 For the Permission <PolicySet> for employees, the HasPrivilegesOfRole <Policy> would look as  
432 follows:

433

```

434 <!-- HasPrivilegesOfRole Policy for employee role -->
435 <Policy xmlns="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17"
436     xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
437     xsi:schemaLocation="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17 xacml-
438 core-v3-schema-wd-17.xsd"
439     PolicyId="Permission:to:have:employee:role:permissions"
440     Version="1.0"
441     RuleCombiningAlgId="&rule-combine;permit-overrides">
442
443     <Target/>
444     <!-- Permission to have employee role permissions -->
445     <Rule RuleId="Permission:to:have:employee:permissions" Effect="Permit">
446         <Condition>
447             <Apply FunctionId="&function;and">
448                 <Apply FunctionId="&function;anyURI-is-in">
449                     <AttributeValue
450                         DataType="&xml;anyURI">&roles;employee</AttributeValue>
451                     <AttributeDesignator
452                         MustBePresent="false"
453                         Category="&category;resource"
454                         AttributeId="&role;"
455                         DataType="&xml;anyURI"/>
456                 </Apply>
457                 <Apply FunctionId="&function;anyURI-is-in">
458                     <AttributeValue
459                         DataType="&xml;anyURI">&actions;hasPrivilegesofRole</AttributeValue>
460                     <AttributeDesignator
461                         MustBePresent="false"
462                         Category="&category;action"
463                         AttributeId="&action;action-id"
464                         DataType="&xml;anyURI"/>
465                 </Apply>
466             </Apply>
467         </Condition>
468     </Rule>
469 </Policy>

```

470 Listing 6 *HasPrivilegesOfRole* <Policy> for employee role

471

472 A Request asking whether subject Anne has the privileges associated with &roles;manager would look as  
473 follows.

474

```
475 <Request xmlns="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17"  
476   xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"  
477   xsi:schemaLocation="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17 xacml-  
478   core-v3-schema-wd-17.xsd"  
479   CombinedDecision="false"  
480   ReturnPolicyIdList="false">  
481   <Attributes Category="&subject-category;access-subject">  
482     <Attribute AttributeId="&subject;subject-id"  
483       IncludeInResult="false">  
484       <AttributeValue DataType="&xml:string">Anne</AttributeValue>  
485     </Attribute>  
486   </Attributes>  
487   <Attributes Category="&category;resource">  
488     <Attribute AttributeId="&role;"  
489       IncludeInResult="false">  
490       <AttributeValue DataType="&xml:anyURI">&roles;manager</AttributeValue>  
491     </Attribute>  
492   </Attributes>  
493   <Attributes Category="&category;action">  
494     <Attribute AttributeId="&action;action-id"  
495       IncludeInResult="false">  
496     <AttributeValue  
497       DataType="&xml:anyURI">&actions;hasPrivilegesOfRole</AttributeValue>  
498     </Attribute>  
499   </Attributes>  
500 </Request>
```

501 Listing 7 Example of *HasPrivilegesOfRole* Request

502

503 Either the <Request> must contain Anne's direct **roles** (in this case, &roles;employee), or else the  
504 PDP's Context Handler must be able to discover them. **HasPrivilegesOfRole policies** do not do the job  
505 of associating **roles** with subjects. See Section 3: Assigning and Enabling Role Attributes for more  
506 information on how **roles** are associated with subjects.

---

## 3 Assigning and Enabling Role Attributes

507

508 {non-normative}

509 The assignment of various *role* attributes to users and the enabling of those attributes within a session  
510 are outside the scope of the XACML PDP. There must be one or more separate entities, referred to a  
511 **Role Enablement Authorities**, implemented to perform these functions. This profile assumes that the  
512 presence in the XACML Request Context of a *role* attribute for a given user (Subject) is a valid  
513 assignment at the time the access decision is requested

514 So where do a subject's *role* attributes come from? What does one of these **Role Enablement**  
515 **Authorities** look like? The answer is implementation dependent, but some possibilities can be  
516 suggested.

517 In some cases, *role* attributes might come from an identity management service that maintains  
518 information about a user, including the subject's assigned or allowed *roles*; the identity management  
519 service acts as the **Role Enablement Authority**. This service might store static *role* attributes in an  
520 LDAP directory, and a PDP's Context Handler might retrieve them from there. Or this service might  
521 respond to requests for a subject's *role* attributes from a PDP's Context Handler, where the requests are  
522 in the form of SAML Attribute Queries.

523 **Role Enablement Authorities** MAY use an XACML Role Assignment <Policy> or <PolicySet> to  
524 determine whether a subject is allowed to have a particular *role* attribute and value enabled. A Role  
525 Assignment <Policy> or <PolicySet> answers the question "Is subject X allowed to have *role* R<sub>i</sub>  
526 enabled?" It does not answer the question "Which set of *roles* is subject X allowed to have enabled?"  
527 The **Role Enablement Authority** must have some way of knowing which *role* or *roles* to submit a  
528 request for. For example, the **Role Enablement Authority** might maintain a list of all possible *roles*,  
529 and, when asked for the *roles* associated with a given subject, make a request against the Role  
530 Assignment policies for each candidate *role*.

531 In this profile, Role Assignment policies are a different set from the Role <PolicySet> and Permission  
532 <PolicySet> instances used to determine the access *permissions* associated with each *role*. **Role**  
533 Assignment policies are to be used only when the XACML Request comes from a **Role Enablement**  
534 **Authority**. This separation may be managed in various ways, such as by using different PDPs with  
535 different policy stores or requiring <Request> elements for *role* enablement queries to include an  
536 <Attributes> element with a Category of "&roles;employee;role-enablement-authority".

537 There is no fixed form for a **Role** Assignment <Policy>. The following example illustrates one possible  
538 form. It contains two XACML <Rule> elements. The first <Rule> states that Anne and Seth and Yassir  
539 are allowed to have the "&roles;employee" *role* enabled between the hours of 9am and 5pm. The second  
540 <Rule> states that Steve is allowed to have the "&roles;manager" *role* enabled, with no restrictions on  
541 time of day.

542

```
543 <Policy xmlns="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17"  
544   xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"  
545   xsi:schemaLocation="urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:core:schema:wd-17 xacml-  
546   core-v3-schema-wd-17.xsd"  
547   PolicyId="Role:Assignment:Policy"  
548   Version="1.0"  
549   RuleCombiningAlgId="&rule-combine;permit-overrides">  
550  
551   <Target/>  
552   <!-- Employee role requirements rule -->  
553   <Rule RuleId="employee:role:requirements" Effect="Permit">  
554     <Target>  
555       <AnyOf>  
556         <AllOf>  
557           <Match MatchId="&function:string-equal">  
558             <AttributeValue
```

```

559         DataType="&xml;string">Seth</AttributeValue>
560     <AttributeDesignator
561         MustBePresent="false"
562         Category="&subject-category;access-subject"
563         AttributeId="&subject;subject-id"
564         DataType="&xml;string"/>
565     </Match>
566 </AllOf>
567 <AllOf>
568     <Match MatchId="&function;string-equal">
569         <AttributeValue
570             DataType="&xml;string">Anne</AttributeValue>
571         <AttributeDesignator
572             MustBePresent="false"
573             Category="&subject-category;access-subject"
574             AttributeId="&subject;subject-id"
575             DataType="&xml;string"/>
576     </Match>
577 </AllOf>
578 </AnyOf>
579 <AnyOf>
580     <AllOf>
581         <Match MatchId="&function;anyURI-equal">
582             <AttributeValue
583                 DataType="&xml;anyURI">&roles;employee</AttributeValue>
584             <AttributeDesignator
585                 MustBePresent="false"
586                 Category="&category;resource"
587                 AttributeId="&role;"
588                 DataType="&xml;anyURI"/>
589         </Match>
590     </AllOf>
591 </AnyOf>
592 <AnyOf>
593     <AllOf>
594         <Match MatchId="&function;anyURI-equal">
595             <AttributeValue
596                 DataType="&xml;anyURI">&actions;enableRole</AttributeValue>
597             <AttributeDesignator
598                 MustBePresent="false"
599                 Category="&category;action"
600                 AttributeId="&action;action-id"
601                 DataType="&xml;anyURI"/>
602         </Match>
603     </AllOf>
604 </AnyOf>
605 </Target>
606 <Condition>
607     <Apply FunctionId="&function;and">
608         <Apply FunctionId="&function;time-greater-than-or-equal">
609             <Apply FunctionId="&function;time-one-and-only">
610                 <AttributeDesignator
611                     MustBePresent="false"
612                     Category="&category;environment"
613                     AttributeId="&environment;current-time"
614                     DataType="&xml;time"/>
615                 </Apply>
616                 <AttributeValue
617                     DataType="&xml;time">9h</AttributeValue>
618                 </Apply>
619             <Apply FunctionId="&function;time-less-than-or-equal">
620                 <Apply FunctionId="&function;time-one-and-only">
621                     <AttributeDesignator
622                         MustBePresent="false"

```



```

623         Category="&category;environment"
624         AttributeId="&environment;current-time"
625         DataType="&xml;time"/>
626     </Apply>
627     <AttributeValue
628         DataType="&xml;time">17h</AttributeValue>
629 </Apply>
630 </Apply>
631 </Condition>
632 </Rule>
633
634 <!-- Manager role requirements rule -->
635 <Rule RuleId="manager:role:requirements" Effect="Permit">
636     <Target>
637         <AnyOf>
638             <AllOf>
639                 <Match MatchId="&function;string-equal">
640                     <AttributeValue
641                         DataType="&xml;string">Steve</AttributeValue>
642                     <AttributeDesignator
643                         MustBePresent="false"
644                         Category="&subject-category;access-subject"
645                         AttributeId="&subject;subject-id"
646                         DataType="&xml;string"/>
647                 </Match>
648             </AllOf>
649         </AnyOf>
650         <AnyOf>
651             <AllOf>
652                 <Match MatchId="&function;anyURI-equal">
653                     <AttributeValue
654                         DataType="&xml;anyURI">&roles;:manager</AttributeValue>
655                     <AttributeDesignator
656                         MustBePresent="false"
657                         Category="&category;resource"
658                         AttributeId="&role;"
659                         DataType="&xml;anyURI"/>
660                 </Match>
661             </AllOf>
662         </AnyOf>
663         <AnyOf>
664             <AllOf>
665                 <Match MatchId="&function;anyURI-equal">
666                     <AttributeValue
667                         DataType="&xml;anyURI">&actions;enableRole</AttributeValue>
668                     <AttributeDesignator
669                         MustBePresent="false"
670                         Category="&category;action"
671                         AttributeId="&action;action-id"
672                         DataType="&xml;anyURI"/>
673                 </Match>
674             </AllOf>
675         </AnyOf>
676     </Target>
677 </Rule>
678 </Policy>

```

679 *Listing 8 Role Assignment <Policy> Example*

---

## 680 4 Implementing the RBAC Model

681 {non-normative}

682 The following sections describe how to use XACML policies to implement various components of the  
683 **RBAC** model as described in [ANSI-RBAC].

### 684 4.1 1.1 Core RBAC

685 {non-normative}

686 Core **RBAC**, as defined in [ANSI-RBAC], includes the following five basic data elements:

- 687 1. Users
- 688 2. Roles
- 689 3. Objects
- 690 4. Operations
- 691 5. Permissions

692 **Users** are implemented using XACML Subjects. Any of the XACML attribute `Category` values which are  
693 semantically associated with subjects may be used, as appropriate.

694 **Roles** are expressed using one or more XACML Subject Attributes. The set of **roles** is very application-  
695 and policy domain-specific, and it is very important that different uses of **roles** not be confused. For  
696 these reasons, this profile does not attempt to define any standard set of **role** values, although this profile  
697 does recommend use of a common `AttributeId` value of “urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:2.0:subject:role”.  
698 It is recommended that each application or policy domain agree on and publish a unique set of  
699 `AttributeId` values, `DataType` values, and `<AttributeValue>` values that will be used for the  
700 various **roles** relevant to that domain.

701 **Objects** are expressed using XACML Resources.

702 **Operations** are expressed using XACML Actions.

703 **Permissions** are expressed using XACML Role `<PolicySet>` and Permission `<PolicySet>` instances  
704 as described in previous sections.

705 Core **RBAC** requires support for multiple users per **role**, multiple **roles** per user, multiple **permissions**  
706 per **role**, and multiple **roles** per **permission**. Each of these requirements can be satisfied by XACML  
707 policies based on this profile as follows. Note, however, that the actual assignment of **roles** to users is  
708 outside the scope of the XACML PDP. For more information see Section 3: Assigning and Enabling Role  
709 Attributes.

710 XACML allows multiple Subjects to be associated with a given **role** attribute. XACML Role  
711 `<PolicySet>`s defined in terms of possession of a particular **role** `<Attribute>` and  
712 `<AttributeValue>` will apply to any requesting user for which that **role** `<Attribute>` and  
713 `<AttributeValue>` are in the XACML Request Context.

714 XACML allows multiple **role** attributes or **role** attribute values to be associated with a given Subject. If a  
715 Subject has multiple **roles** enabled, then any Role `<PolicySet>` instance applying to any of those **roles**  
716 may be evaluated, and the **permissions** in the corresponding Permission `<PolicySet>` will be  
717 permitted. As described in Section 1.9: Multi-Role Permissions, it is even possible to define policies that  
718 require a given Subject to have multiple **role** attributes or values enabled at the same time. In this case,  
719 the **permissions** associated with the multiple-**role** requirement will apply only to a Subject having all the  
720 necessary **role** attributes and values at the time an XACML Request Context is presented to the PDP for  
721 evaluation.

722 The Permission `<PolicySet>` associated with a given **role** may allow access to multiple resources  
723 using multiple actions. XACML has a rich set of constructs for composing **permissions**, so there are  
724 multiple ways in which multi-**permission roles** may be expressed. Any Role A may be associated with a

725 Permission <PolicySet> B by including a <PolicySetIdReference> to Permission <PolicySet>  
726 B in the Permission <PolicySet> associated with the Role A. In this way, the same set of **permissions**  
727 may be associated with more than one **role**.

728 In addition to the basic Core **RBAC** requirements, XACML policies using this profile can also express  
729 arbitrary conditions on the application of particular **permissions** associated with a **role**. Such conditions  
730 might include limiting the **permissions** to a given time period during the day, or limiting the **permissions**  
731 to **role** holders who also possess some other attribute, whether it is a **role** attribute or not.

## 732 4.2 1.2 Hierarchical RBAC

733 {non-normative}

734 Hierarchical **RBAC**, as defined in [ANSI-RBAC], expands Core **RBAC** with the ability to define  
735 inheritance relations between **roles**. For example, Role A may be defined to inherit all **permissions**  
736 associated with Role B. In this case, Role A is considered to be senior to Role B in the **role** hierarchy. If  
737 Role B in turn inherits **permissions** associated with Role C, then Role A will also inherit those  
738 **permissions** by virtue of being senior to Role B.

739 XACML policies using this profile can implement **role** inheritance by including a  
740 <PolicySetIdReference> to the Permission <PolicySet> associated with one **role** inside the  
741 Permission <PolicySet> associated with another **role**. The **role** that includes the  
742 <PolicySetIdReference> will then inherit the **permissions** associated with the referenced **role**.

743 This profile structures policies in such a way that inheritance properties may be added to a **role** at any  
744 time without requiring changes to <PolicySet> instances associated with any other **roles**. An  
745 organization may not initially use **role** hierarchies, but may later decide to make use of this functionality  
746 without having to rewrite existing policies.

---

## 747 5 Profile

### 748 5.1 Roles and Role Attributes

749 **Roles** SHALL be expressed using one or more XACML Attributes. Each application domain using this  
750 profile for **role** based access control SHALL define or agree upon one or more `AttributeId` values to  
751 be used for **role** attributes. Each such `AttributeId` value SHALL be associated with a set of permitted  
752 values and their `DataTypes`. Each permitted value for such an `AttributeId` SHALL have well-defined  
753 semantics for the use of the corresponding value in policies.

754 This profile RECOMMENDS use of the “urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:2.0:subject:role” `AttributeId` value  
755 for all **role** attributes. Instances of this Attribute SHOULD have a `DataType` of  
756 “http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#anyURI”.

### 757 5.2 Role Assignment or Enablement

758 A **Role Enablement Authority**, responsible for assigning **roles** to users and for enabling **roles** for use  
759 within a user's session, MAY use an XACML Role Assignment `<Policy>` or `<PolicySet>` to determine  
760 which users are allowed to enable which **roles** and under which conditions. There is no prescribed form  
761 for a Role Assignment `<Policy>` or `<PolicySet>`. It is RECOMMENDED that **roles** in a Role  
762 Assignment `<Policy>` or `<PolicySet>` be expressed as Resource Attributes, where the  
763 `AttributeId` is `&role;` and the `<AttributeValue>` is the URI for the relevant **role** value. It is  
764 RECOMMENDED that the action of assigning or enabling a **role** be expressed as an Action Attribute,  
765 where the `AttributeId` is `&action;action-id`, the `DataType` is `&xml:anyURI`, and the  
766 `<AttributeValue>` is `&actions;enableRole`.

### 767 5.3 Access Control

768 **Role** based access control SHALL be implemented using two types of `<PolicySet>`s: Role  
769 `<PolicySet>`, Permission `<PolicySet>`. The specific functions and requirements of these two types  
770 of `<PolicySet>`s are as follows.

771 For each **role**, one Role `<PolicySet>` SHALL be defined. Such a `<PolicySet>` SHALL contain a  
772 `<Target>` element that makes the `<PolicySet>` applicable only to Subjects having the XACML  
773 Attribute associated with the given **role**; the `<Target>` element SHALL NOT restrict the Resource,  
774 Action, or Environment. Each Role `<PolicySet>` SHALL contain a single `<PolicySetIdReference>`  
775 element that references the unique Permission `<PolicySet>` associated with the **role**. The Role  
776 `<PolicySet>` SHALL NOT contain any other `<Policy>`, `<PolicySet>`, `<PolicyIdReference>`, or  
777 `<PolicySetIdReference>` elements.

778 For each **role**, one Permission `<PolicySet>` SHALL be defined. Such a `<PolicySet>` SHALL contain  
779 `<PolicySet>`, `<Policy>` and `<Rule>` elements that specify the types of access permitted to Subjects  
780 having the given **role**. The `<Target>` of the `<PolicySet>` and its included or referenced  
781 `<PolicySet>`, `<Policy>`, and `<Rule>` elements SHALL NOT limit the Subjects to which the  
782 Permission `<PolicySet>` is applicable.

783 If a given **role** inherits **permissions** from one or more **junior roles**, then the Permission `<PolicySet>`  
784 for the given (senior) **role** SHALL include a `<PolicySetIdReference>` element for each **junior role**.  
785 Each such `<PolicySetIdReference>` shall reference the Permission `<PolicySet>` associated with  
786 the **junior role** from which the **senior role** inherits.

787 A Permission `<PolicySet>` MAY include a `HasPrivilegesOfRole <Policy>`. Such a `<Policy>` SHALL  
788 have a `<Rule>` element with an effect of “Permit”. This Rule SHALL permit any Subject to perform an  
789 Action with an Attribute having an `AttributeId` of `&action;action-id`, a `DataType` of `&xml:anyURI`, and  
790 an `<AttributeValue>` having a value of `&actions;hasPrivilegesOfRole` on a Resource having an

791 Attribute that is the **role** to which the Permission <PolicySet> applies (for example, an AttributeId  
792 of &role;, a DataType of &xml:anyURI, and an <AttributeValue> whose value is the URI of the  
793 specific **role** value). Note that the **role** Attribute, which is a Subject Attribute in a Role <PolicySet>  
794 <Target>, is treated as a Resource Attribute in a HasPrivilegesOfRole <Policy>.

795 The organization of any repository used for policies and the configuration of the PDP SHALL ensure that  
796 the PDP can never use a Permission <PolicySet> as the PDP's initial policy.

---

## 797 6 Identifiers

798 This profile defines the following URN identifiers.

### 799 6.1 Profile Identifier

800 The following identifier SHALL be used as the identifier for this profile when an identifier in the form of a  
801 URI is required.

802 urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:3.0:profiles:rbac:core-hierarchical

### 803 6.2 Role Attribute

804 The following identifier MAY be used as the `AttributeId` for **role** Attributes.

805 urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:2.0:subject:role

### 806 6.3 SubjectCategory

807 The following identifier MAY be used as the `Category` for Subject Attributes identifying that a Request is  
808 coming from a **Role Enablement Authority**.

809 urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:2.0:subject-category:role-enablement-authority

### 810 6.4 Action Attribute Values

811 The following identifier MAY be used as the `<AttributeValue>` of the `&action;action-id` Attribute in a  
812 `HasPrivilegesOfRole <Policy>`.

813 urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:2.0:actions:hasPrivilegesOfRole

814 The following identifier MAY be used as the `<AttributeValue>` of the `&action;action-id` Attribute in a  
815 `Role Assignment <Policy>`.

816 urn:oasis:names:tc:xacml:2.0:actions:enableRole

---

## 817 **7 Conformance**

818 An implementation may conform to this profile in one or more of the following ways.

### 819 **7.1 As a policy processor**

820 An implementation conforms to this specification as a policy processor if it makes use of XACML policies  
821 in the manner described in sections 5 and 6.

### 822 **7.2 As an XACML request generator**

823 An implementation conforms to this specification as an XACML request generator if it produces XACML  
824 requests in the manner described in sections 5 and 6.

---

## 825 **A. Acknowledgements**

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828

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855

856



857

## B. Revision History

858 [optional; should not be included in OASIS Standards]

859

Revision	Date	Editor	Changes Made
WD 1	[Rev Date]	Erik Rissanen	Initial update to XACML 3.0.
WD 2	28 Dec 2007	Erik Rissanen	Update to the current OASIS template.
WD 3	4 Nov 2008	Erik Rissanen	Fixed typos in the examples.
WD 4	5 Apr 2009	Erik Rissanen	Editorial cleanups. Added conformance section.
WD 5	14 Dec 2009	Erik Rissanen	Also allow <PolicySet> in permission policyset.
WD 06	17 Dec 2009	Erik Rissanen	Fixed formatting issues Updated acknowledgments
WD 07	12 Jan 2010	Erik Rissanen	Updated cross references. Corrected examples so they are valid against the XACML schema. Updated acknowledgments
WD 08	8 Mar 2010	Erik Rissanen	Updated cross references Fixed OASIS formatting issues Removed reference to XACML 2.0 intro

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